

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NORTH  
CAROLINA TROOPS ON THE  
CONTINENTAL ESTABLISHMENT IN THE  
WAR OF THE REVOLUTION, WITH A  
REGISTER OF OFFICERS OF THE SAME**

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A Brief History of the North Carolina Troops on the Continental Establishment in the War of the Revolution, with a Register of Officers of the Same by Charles L. Davis

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**BENJAMIN HAWKINS.**

1754-1816.

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BY

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Member of Pennsylvania Historical Society: Professor of Military Science, Bingham School,  
Asheville, North Carolina.

ALSO

A SKETCH

OF THE

NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY

OF THE

CINCINNATI

FROM ITS ORGANIZATION IN 1783 TO ITS SO-CALLED  
DISSOLUTION AFTER 1790.

BY

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A HISTORY  
OF THE  
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REMONSTRANCES and petitions being of no avail with the British Crown, the people of North Carolina, in defence of their rights and liberties, in common with the other colonies, early in 1774, had taken measures to resist the oppressions of their mother-country. William Hooper, writing April 26, 1774, to James Iredell, says, "With you I anticipate the important share which the colonies must soon have in regulating the political balance. They are fast striding to independence, and will ere long build an empire on the ruins of Britain." Safety committees were formed in most of the counties, and, notwithstanding the opposition of the Royal Governor, Josiah Martin, a Provincial Congress met at New Bern, August 25, 1774, of which Colonel John Harvey was elected Moderator, and among its members were the eloquent and polished William Hooper and fiery John Ashe, both from New Hanover, and the proud and wealthy Samuel Johnston, with Joseph Hewes and Thomas Jones, of Chowan, and Robert Howe, of Brunswick (who

was afterwards to acquire great military fame), together with many other honorable and patriotic men. This Congress at once appointed delegates (William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, and Richard Caswell) to the Continental Congress, to meet at Philadelphia in the ensuing month of September, and, having passed resolutions expressive of the rights of the colonies, it adjourned November 1, 1774.

The first Continental Congress, meeting at Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, prepared an address to King George III., and passed a resolution to cease all commercial intercourse with Great Britain in case of his refusal to redress the grievances of the colonies. It adjourned October 26, 1774, to meet again May 10, 1775.

Upon the call of Colonel John Harvey, and, notwithstanding the strong opposition of the Royal Governor Martin, another Provincial Congress met at New Bern, April 3, 1775, and, as an indication of the approaching struggle shown in the selection of delegates, they were, in almost every instance, those who were members of the House of Assembly under the Royal authority, and Colonel Harvey was elected the Moderator of one body and Speaker of the other; both bodies sitting at the same time and place, at one time performing the functions of one and then of the other body.

The House of Assembly was dissolved by Governor Martin on April 8, 1775, and John Harvey, as Speaker of that body, received the last address which the Royal Governor was to make to it, the last Royal Legislature that met in North Carolina. Without formal dissolution, it at once, with additional members, continued its functions as

the Provincial Congress, and returned the same delegates to the Continental Congress to meet in Philadelphia in May, 1775. Governor Martin called his Council together and denounced the acts of the Provincial Congress. For defence he caused a few guns to be placed before his palace at New Bern; but, while he and his Council were in session, these guns were seized by a body of brave men, headed by Dr. Alexander Gaston and Richard Cogdell, on April 24, 1775, and carried away. The terrified Governor, with a few followers, fled at once to Wilmington, and thence, soon afterwards, to Fort Johnson, at the mouth of Cape Fear River, from which he was driven on July 15, 1775, by Colonels James Moore and John Ashe,\* with a body of troops, to

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\* Colonel John Ashe was born 1721. His father, John Baptista Ashe, the founder of the family, emigrated from England in the early part of 1727. He was a friend of Lord Craven, under whose patronage he came, with his family, to seek his fortune in the Western world. He was a gentleman of liberal education, accomplished manners, and superior intellect, and in 1730 was one of the Council of Governor George Burrington, of North Carolina. His two sons, John and Samuel, as well as their sons, were distinguished in the field of battle and councils of the State. Of this family there were in the Revolutionary War seven officers—Brigadier-General John Ashe, of the militia from the District of Wilmington, with his sons, Captains John and Samuel of the Continental Army (the latter of whom was a member of the North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati); Paymaster Samuel Ashe, Sr., with his sons, Lieutenant-Colonel John Baptista Ashe and Lieutenant Samuel Ashe, Jr., of the Continentals and Captain Cincinnatus Ashe, of the Marines, the latter of whom was lost at sea. Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Ashe was a member of the North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati, a member of the Continental Congress in 1787-8, and from 1790 to 1793 a member of the Congress under the Constitution. In 1795 he represented Halifax in the House of Commons of North Carolina, and was afterwards elected Governor of the State, but died